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'Who touched my clothes?': The Healing of the Woman with the Haemorrhage (Mark 5: 24–34; Luke 8: 42–48 and Matthew 9: 19–22) in Early Medieval Visual Culture*

Barbara Baert

WITHIN THE BIBLICAL miraculous healings, the story of the Haemorrhoïssa (the haemorrhaging woman) has a special place (Mark 5: 24–34; Luke 8: 42–48 and Matthew 9: 19–22). The healing takes place through touching at the initiative of the sick person herself, in this case a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for 12 years. The gospels suggest that precisely this initiative on the woman's part is something that crossed the boundaries of decency in those days. Moreover, this touching was experienced as a charged undertaking. Christ felt a certain strength flow from himself, as if the woman's touching took something away from him. The synoptic's text thus holds a great complexity: there is a remarkable relationship between touching and healing, and it involves a woman of whom it is suggested that she is *impure* by law. In addition, the episode is set within the context of another miracle: the raising of Jairus' daughter.

This article treats a complex of problems of the Haemorrhoïssa from an interdisciplinary point of view. In the first part – text and intertext – I will pursue the different layers of meaning of the biblical texts. In the second part – crowd and hem – I will confront this analysis with the genesis of the Haemorrhoïssa in art. The transition of text into image holds more subtleties and variants than one would initially surmise. Additionally, we note a fascinating variety of media from the image genesis onwards: sarcophaguses and sculptures, textilia, reliquaries, amulets, manuscripts, mosaics, mural paintings. In other words, the story of the Haemorrhoïssa makes different connections with various materials and contexts. Indeed, the passage from the gospels assumes different positions between high and low art in early Western and Eastern Christianity. That is why I prefer to talk about a 'visual culture'.

In the third part – magic and healing – we will see how the Haemorrhoïssa is lifted outside the gospel to lead a life of her own as magical protégée for women and men against dangerous swellings and bleedings of the uterus. This peculiar branch will be investigated against the background of blood taboos. In the fourth part – blood, touch and space –the Haemorrhoïssa's story will be considered in its contextual *Nachleben*. The story in text and image is also story of blood and sacred space: sacrificial versus procreative blood, male versus female blood, neutral versus taboo blood, touchable and untouchable blood, internal and external blood, flowing versus still blood – in short: good versus bad blood.

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1. Text and intertext

AQ1 Mark 5: 24b–34parr reads as follows:[1]

And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him.[25] *Now there was a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years.*[26] *She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse.*[27] *She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak,*[28] *for she said, »If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well.«* [29] *Immediately her haemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.*[30] *Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, »Who touched my clothes?«*[31] *And his disciples said to him, »You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'«*[32] *He looked all round to see who had done it.*[33] *But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth.*[34] *He said to her, »Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.«*

The episode of the Haemorrhoïssa is told in the synoptic gospels: Mark 5: 24–34; Luke 8: 42–48 and Matthew 9: 19–22.[2] The story is framed within the story of Christ's resurrection of Jairus' daughter and takes place when Jesus has crossed the Sea of Galilee, namely on the west bank, on Jewish soil. The Haemorrhoïssa steps forward out of the mass of people as a nameless anonymous woman with her own internal desire: to be healed of the haemorrhages from which she has been suffering for 12 years. She believes this will happen as soon as she touches Christ's clothes.

Some exegetes point to a number of interesting connections between both stories.[3] The Jairus story forms a framework for the episode of the Haemorrhoïssa, which is a *tormenting delay*[4] for its frame story: it is because of this woman that Jesus arrives too late for Jarius' daughter. The Haemorrhoïssa episode functions as a dramatic interruption that is taken from Jesus but which He also considers a necessity: He pauses to find her. Mark has probably established a number of symbolic relationships and contrasts between the 12-year old girl and the 12 years that the woman had been undergoing ineffective treatment. The number 12 itself can also refer to the 12 tribes of Israel. The girl faces the beginning of her *menses* while the woman is healed through the stopping of the flood.[5] One mass hinders healing, the other makes healing possible. Jairus is rich, but the Haemorrhoïssa is poor after losing all her money to medical treatment. Both women are called daughter although they are both ritually impure: one because of death, the other because of menstruation. In the Book of Numbers 5: 1–4 God commands Moses to dispose of sickly menstruating women (the so-called *zabâ*[6]) and corpses; in Mark 5 and Luke 8, however, both are precisely touched and even healed. Both cases therefore develop a certain amount of tension with the Jewish doctrine. Both cases, additionally, share the fact that fear is a significant emotion.

Tension is present in the texts between the »stolen« touch and the search for the identity of the woman. There is tension between the group of people that touches and the special individual touch of one woman. Also remarkable is the breach between what is fluid and what stops: her fountain of blood dries up at the exact moment that something »flows away« from Christ. Exegetes today debate the problematic of the nature of the healing (magic?), its performance (the touching happened at the woman's initiative), the illness

itself (is it indeed a uterine bleeding?) and the possible anti-Judaic undertone of the episode (is Mark referring to a Jewish impurity law?).

Christ's miracles of healing happen through the word, through touching, through word and touching, through the use of saliva, they happen from a distance or through incision.[7] The Haemorrhoïssa clearly belongs to the category of touching: *haptein, tenere*, but stands out as an exception because the woman takes the initiative for her healing.[8] Reimund Bieringer studied the syntactic meaning and frequency of the word in the Old and New Testament.[9] The Greek verb *haptein* is the most general verb for touching, but also means »to approach«, »to be in contact with something or someone« or »to touch emotionally« (both in a friendly and in an inimical way). Comparative research of the frequency and the contextual meaning of the verb *haptein*, has shown a cultic meaning (Ex 29: 37) or a taboo of touch (*Leviticus* and Numbers) between people, things and dead bodies.

Lalleman sees healings by touch as a typical Jewish–Christian theme.[10] Greek–Roman practice appeals to therapy, sacrifice and similar practices.[11] Mark and Luke specify that doctors could not help the woman. The Christ healing, by contrast, is a flash, a *momentum* without further means or the embodiment in a process or a therapy, and thus uniquely connects the touching – *haptomai* – with the possibility of healing.[12] But in this specific episode something more happens. Mention is made of a power that flows away (*dynamij; virtus*) over which Christ has no control.[13] This magical interpretation, however, is discouraged by Mark and Luke. At the end of the episode, the healing is attributed to Christ's person. Christ, moreover, explains the miracle by referring to the woman's faith. He also calls her »daughter«, which suggests a personal relationship and hints at intertextuality with the story of Jairus' daughter. Some exegetes interpret Jesus' pause, which is the time He takes to find the Haemorrhoïssa in the crowd, as a task to convince the woman that something that exceeds superstition had happened.[14] In that sense, one could consider categorising this healing in 'two phases' under the healings through »touch and word«, in contrast with Wilkinson's opinion that the Haemorrhoïssa is healed by touch only.[15]

Besides the problem of healing, magic and the miraculous act, there has been a certain amount of controversy around the nature of the Haemorrhoïssa's illness, as is explained by Richard A. Horsley: »The importance of the woman who had haemorrhaging for twelve years . . . has been obscured in recent interpretation. Indeed, by setting Jesus in opposition to 'Judaism', Christian theological interpretation has not only blocked recognition of important aspects of Mark's story, it has imposed some highly distorting false issues onto these episodes and the significance of these women. It is important to dispense with these distorting false issues in order to clear the way for a fresh hearing of these intertwined episodes.«[16] In today's revisitation of the Haemorrhoïssa episode, it is commonly accepted that the woman's bleeding was indeed of a uterine nature.[17] The text literally says »a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years« (*mulier quae erat in profluvio sanguinis annis duodecimo*, Mark 5: 25). The evangelists seem hesitant to locate the exact source of the haemorrhages. Mark 5: 29, moreover, refers to the source/fountain of her blood (*fons sanguinis eius (siccatus est)*, which is as such a

concept out of Leviticus 12: 7; 15: 19–33 and 20:18, where the *zabâ* is discussed.[18]

Exegetic literature has brought forward some important cruxes in the text of the Haemorrhoïssa episode, and has also revealed the background issue of historical relevance, like the taboo of menstruation and the nature of the touch. These background issues are relevant for the semantics of the image and the iconographic tradition around the Haemorrhoïssa.

2. Crowd and hem: narrative and iconic space

In his essay *Àdistance*, Carlo Ginzberg has inimitably discussed how the introduction of the Haemorrhoïssa into early-Christian art cannot be separated from a fascination for what he calls the *Punctum*: *l'instant décisif*.[19] In the interspace of image and word one finds »moments of suction«. The moment that Christ's clothes are touched is joined together with the moment of healing (*fons sanguinis siccatus est*) and the moment that Jesus feels a »power« (*virtus*) flowing from Him and He looks back. In the condensation of energy around these verses (Mark 5: 28–30; Luke 8: 44–46), the opening towards the image presents itself. The texts tears open and the visual momentum escapes: *le point décisif*.

In one of the murals in the catacomb of Peter and Marcellinus (Rome, *c.*340) the meeting between the Haemorrhoïssa and Christ is represented in such a *punctum* (Fig. 1).[20] The woman kneels down before Christ on one knee. The position of his body tells us that He has just turned around (*conversus ad turbam*: Mark 5: 30). The crowd itself is not depicted. The scene is thus limited to the intimacy of the two characters. It is possible that the artist envisioned the final moments of the encounter: »your faith has made you well; go in peace« (34). This would explain Christ's extended pointing hand and the fact that the woman establishes eye contact with Him (33: *procidit ante eum*). On the other hand, however, we also see how the Haemorrhoïssa reaches for Christ's cloak to get hold of its hem. Christ's pointing hand and the woman's reaching hand are on the same vertical axis. We could presume this to be the capturing of the »suddenness« of the healing (*confestim*, 29) intertwined with the »suddenness« of Jesus' perception (*statim iesus cognoscens*, 30).

Fig. 1. ***Christ and the Haemorrhoissa*, mural in the catacomb of SS Peter and Marcellinus, third century. Rome.**

The Haemorrhoïssa, however, does not seize the cloak. What is also striking in this mural painting is the fact that both characters' left hands stay in contact with their own

clothes. The Haemorrhoïssa touches her veil, while Christ holds His cloak at waist height. The hands mark the intimacy between the body and the clothes. The hem, the pictorial contour, forms the boundary between the bodies, but in the episode of Haemorrhoïssa this boundary is crossed.

As an early-Christian phenomenon, the Haemorrhoïssa disseminates over the other expressions of material culture, like sarcophaguses and reliquaries.[21] I will investigate whether the iconography shows conventions, and whether there are different interactions with the primary source discernible in the synoptic gospels.

On the so-called tree sarcophagus of Arles (*c.*360) we see the Haemorrhoïssa huddled down, supporting herself on one knee at Christ's feet with both hands grasping part of the hem (Fig. 2). Christ touches her head, as in the fragment of the Callixtus catacomb from that period (Fig. 3). This touching of the head is found in the textual source. At the level of the image a tactile connection arises between hem and head, between a touch of the lower regions of the body, and a touch of the upper regions of the body. Christ's touch was probably needed for the contemporary to understand the actual healing of the woman. The action of the miracle is also attributed to Christ, and not just the touching of the hem.[22] In this sarcophagus, Christ does not make eye contact with the Haemorrhoïssa; He, by contrast, looks at Peter, referring to the moment that He searches for her and does not find her immediately.[23] The approach from the back is a visual topos for the outcast, which was understood as such by contemporaries.[24]

Fig. 3. *Christ and the Haemorrhoissa*, sarcophagus fragment from the Catacomb of St. Callixtus. Rome.

On the ivory Lipsanotheque of Brescia (fourth century) we clearly see how the Haemorrhoïssa holds the seam while kneeling down (Fig. 4). Christ blesses her without touching her, and does not look at her, in contrast with the woman herself: his eyes seek elsewhere.[25] Several timeframes of the story are combined within the limited tectonics of the compartments of sarcophaguses or reliquaries. The double moment (the woman's action and Christ's becoming aware), combined with the touching of the head is a

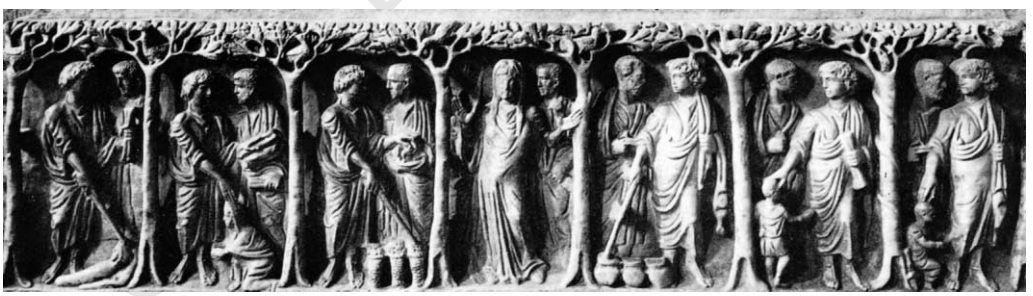

Fig. 2. *Christ and the Haemorrhoissa,* detail of the so-called »*Tree-sarcophagus*«, Gaul, *c.*350–336. Arles, Musée Lapidaire d'Art Chrétien.

Fig. 4. ***Christ and the Haemorrhoissa*****, detail of the** ***Lipsanothek of Brescia*****, *c.*360–370, ivory relief. Brescia, Museo Civico.**

recurrent formula, as on the sarcophagus of Adelphia and Syracuse (*c.*340) (Fig. 5), on another sarcophagus of the Vatican (Fig. 6), and on the sarcophagus of the Leiden Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, where Peter can be identified by the cock (Fig. 7).[26]

On a later fifth-century sarcophagus of the Istanbul archaeological museum, the formula of the catacomb of Peter and Marcellinus is repeated. Again there is intimate contact (Fig. 8). The Haemorrhoïssa kneels down on one knee. Christ holds his hand above the woman's head, while with his other hand He holds on to his cloak. This time, however, not she but He tries to make eye contact. On the miniature of Otto III (Reichenau, 998–1000), which features the resurrection of Jairus' daughter, the Haemorrhoïssa is almost absent (Fig. 9).[27] Repressed to the farthest left lower corner, as if she is an outcast within the frame of the image itself, she carefully touches the hem with one finger. Within the scene of the resurrection she is in all senses a marginal motif. Christ is occupied with the other miracle, but turns round to Peter, which refers to the text fragment of His becoming aware. I know of no other example wherein a woman touches the hem with such utter carefulness, perhaps maybe in the Codex Egberti (Reichenau, *c.*977–993) where only the top of the finger touches the border of the

Fig. 5. ***Christ and the Haemorrhoissa*****, detail of the sarcophagus of Adelphia and Syrakus, Rome, *c.*340. Syracuse, Sicily, Museo Nazionale.**

Fig. 6. *Christ and the Haemorrhoissa*, detail of sarcophagus, third century. Rome, Vatican museums.

cloak (Fig. 10).[28] Both Ottonian examples show a remarkable absence of a holding or a grabbing of the hem, but feature the lightest possible tactile contact both physically and pictorially. This careful touching with one finger might refer to a court style.

The Haemorrhoïssa has received pictorial and sculptural form as a nameless, sickly being.[29] She is often completely veiled. This motif is also known from the early-Christian Chairete at the grave (Fig. 11).[30] In the context of the Haemorrhoïssa, the veil also emphasizes her anonymity, her desire to conceal her being.[31] The Haemorrhoïssa is a woman of secrecy, of fear and isolation, but not out of pride but out of shame, although hope is her most powerful driving force. In this subordinate pose, however, nuances are to be recognized. A first nuance is the crawling, reaching movement towards the hem. This pose refers to the sneaking action of the woman. This is a different moment from the pose of the final movement – *venit et procidit* (Mark 5: 33) – when she falls down trembling before Christ's feet. I recognize a possible third nuance: the kneeling down on one knee. The genuflection usually also implies eye contact, which would mean that the ending of the story is highlighted: Christ enforces her healing.[32] This

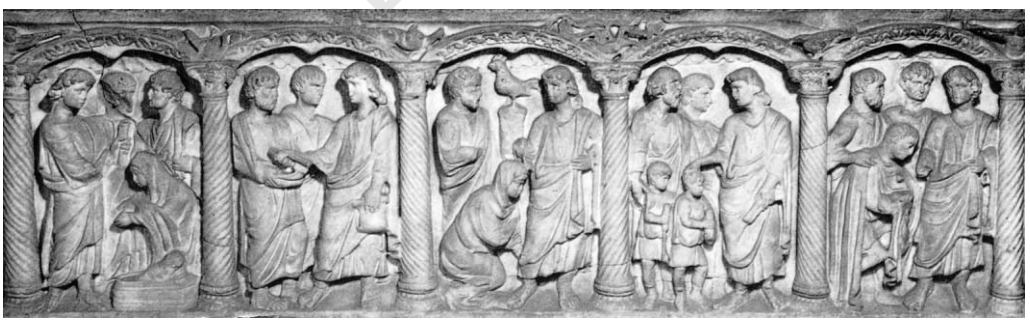

Fig. 7. *Christ and the Haemorrhoissa*, detail of sarcophagus 390. Leiden, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, inv. nr. Pb 35.

Fig. 8. ***Christ and the Haemorrhoissa*****, detail of sarcophagus, fifth century. Istanbul, Archeological Museum.**

213 third variant could refer to the last verses:
214 *fides tua te salvam fecit* (35).

Fig. 9. ***Healing of the Haemorrhoissa and the daughter of Jairus*****, miniature of the** ***Gospel of Otto III*****, Reichenau, end of the tenth century. Munich, Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Lat. Cim 58, fol. 44.**

In these first iconographic instances we find no explicit references to the nature of the Haemorrhoïssa's illness. The figurative image is limited in its representation of this intimate illness. In depictions of the healing of the blind man at Siloam (John 9: 1–4)[33] the eyes are pointed to, and in those of the paralytic at the Piscina Probatica (John 5: 1–8) the bed or the crutch refer to the specific handicap.[34] But in the case of the Haemorrhoïssa nothing allows us to deduce that the miracle involves a haemorrhage of the uterus. On the one hand, the iconography uses the conventions of the healing Saviour (the laying on of hands), on the other hand it uses the elements of the story (a kneeling woman, the hem, the presence of Peter and the disciples). On the sarcophagus of Celsus in Milan (fourth century) the Haemorrhoïssa is typologically combined with Peter, who turns the prison wall into flowing water (Fig. 12).[35] This adjacency articulates a contrast between a miraculous flowing and a miraculous drying up. Both cases feature a necessary restoration of nature for the sake of the individual and the community. The parallel that was drawn

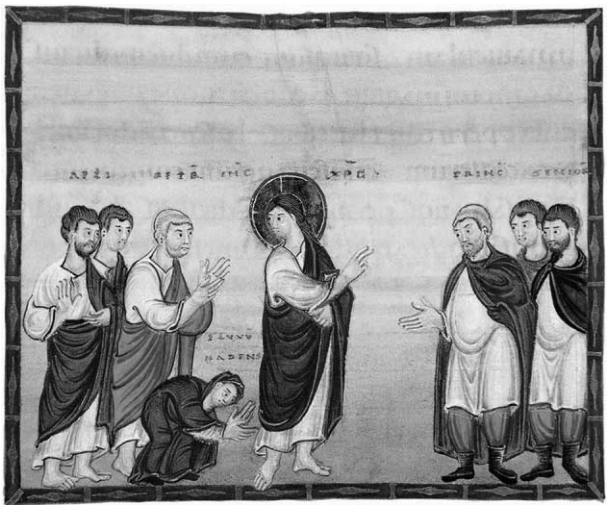

Fig. 10. ***Healing of Haemorrhoissa*****, miniature of the** ***Codex Egberti*****, Reichenau, 977–993. Trier, Stadtbibliothek, ms. 24, fol. 90v.**

in this sarcophagus sets out a trail towards a deeper consciousness of the impact of the healing of the Haemorrhoïssa in the context of the Bible on the one hand, and the basic polarity between solidity and liquidity on the other hand.

The next issue involves the embedding of the Haemorrhoïssa in early-Christian thought. How should we understand her popularity on sarcophaguses, and are there clues to a specific perception of this woman in the fourth and fifth century, for example in contemporary sources and scholarly comments?

3. Healing and magic

In early-Christian days, Christ's miracles took up the greater part of evangelical themes. In his book *The Clash of Gods: A Reinterpretation of Early Christian Art*, Thomas Mathews situates the miracles of healing in the context of a still ambivalent view of the Saviour.[36] The author makes an argument for the interpretation of the miracle stories as expressions of a view of the world that is still influenced by magic. The iconographic preoccupation – both quantitatively and qualitatively – with the miracles of healing can be seen as a powerful, cyclically organized answer to Antique traditions. Not Asclepius, not the wizard-God, is central, but the Son of God who heals in one word, one touch, in the power of monotheism and as such tears off the Antique roots. The apologetic character of the iconography on, for instance, sarcophaguses consequently shows itself in Christ as »true« magician. »The force of the Early Christian miracle images is their radical novelty…. The moment of the miracle is critical … this was a new kind of imagery, for which, surprisingly enough, non-Christian art had no answer. Paganism had no images to compare with this propaganda.«[37] When Origen (*c.*284) defends Christ against mocking heathens, he does not deny that Christ had gifts of magic, but rather defends Him as a true healer who performed his magic without quackery and without asking for a fee.

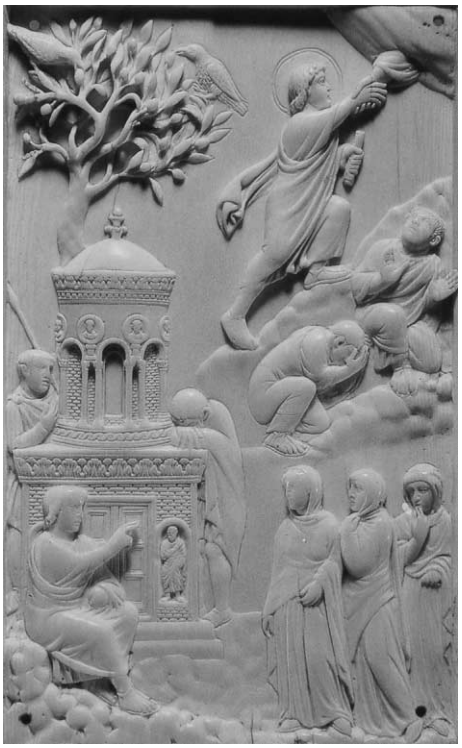

Fig. 11. ***Myrrhophores at the tomb and the Assumption of Christ*****, detail from the so-called** ***Reidersche Tafel*****, northern Italy or Rome,** ***c.*****400. Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. MA 157.**

Fig. 12. ***Healing of the Haemorrhoissa and Peter turning the prison wall into water*****, Celsus sarcophagus, fourth century. Milan, S. Maria presso S. Celso.**

Even more so, the mere utterance of His name could exorcise demons.[38]

The importance of »magic«, namely fear of disasters, illnesses and possession, was still very much present in paleochristian and early-medieval times. This also explains the penetration of the theme of the Christian Healer in the different kinds of imagery: sarcophaguses, ceramics, jewellery, intaglios, amulets, and textilia. Asterius, Bishop of Pontus in Asia Minor, writes the following around 400: »The more religious among rich men and women, having picked out the story of the Gospels, have handed it over to the weavers – I mean our Christ together with all His disciples, and each one of the miracles the way it is related. You may see the wedding of Galilee with the water jars, the paralytic carrying his bed on his shoulder, the blind man healed by means of clay, the woman with an issue of blood seizing Christ's hem, the sinful woman falling at the feet of Jesus, Lazarus coming back to life from his tomb. In doing this, they consider themselves to be religious and to be wearing clothes that are agreeable to God.«[39]

It is possible that the frequent presence of the Haemorrhoïssa in early-Christian iconography is linked to the fascination for the miraculous Lord as such, and thus to an iconography that responds to a pragmatic redeeming interpretation of Christ's message. The Haemorrhoïssa is indeed a theme that also grounds itself in everyday material culture. A Haemorrhoïssa has been identified on the basis of her superscription on a fifth-century piece of cloth that was not used in a liturgical context, but as a household utensil (Fig. 13).[40] As one descends in the material culture of the first Christians, one even finds the Haemorrhoïssa in the world of gems, spells, miraculous stones and amulets.[41] I will

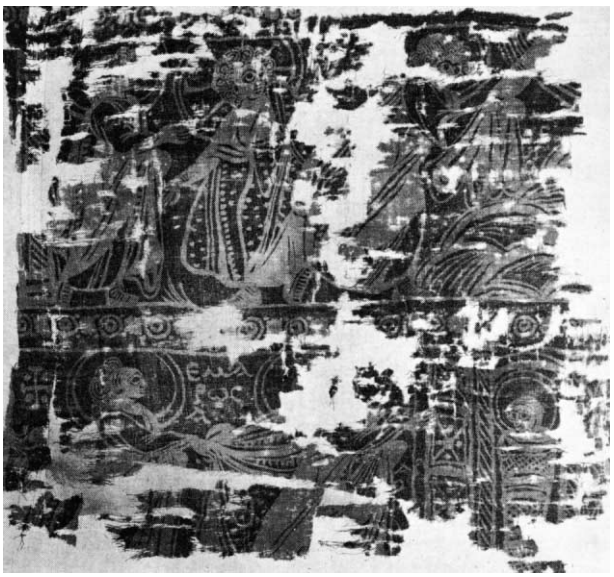

Fig. 13. ***Lazarus and healing of Haemorrhoissa*****, coptic textile, fifth century. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, inv. No. 722-1897.**

attempt to find a pattern behind this crossing over below.

A.A. Barb mentions an amulet in the British Museum with Greek inscriptions from the early-Byzantine age which features Christian iconography on one side, and Gnostic inspired iconography on the other side (Fig. 14a–b).[42] The first shows three registers with Biblical scenes and miracles of healing, amongst which the blind man at Siloam and the paralytic at the *Piscina Probatica*. In the middle of the third line,

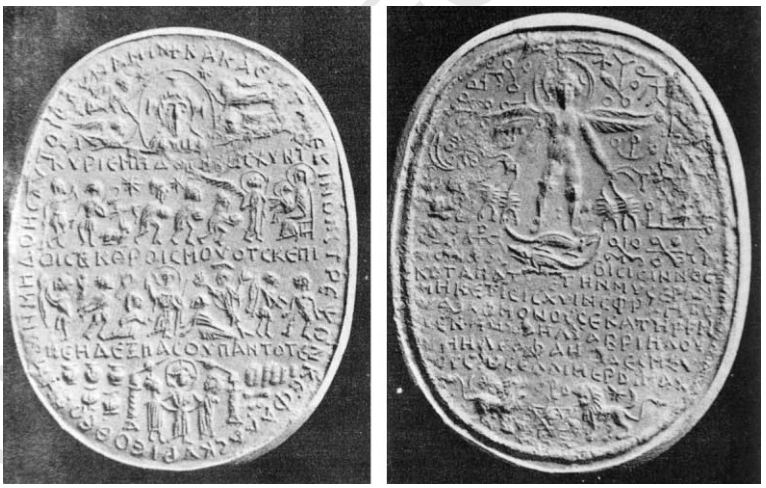

Fig. 14. Amulet, byzantine. London, British Museum, reg. no. 1938.

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Fig. 15.

we find the Haemorrhoïssa, recognizable by her outstretched hands towards Christ's hem. The inscription asks for strength for its bearer and weakness for the enemy. On the Gnostic side one recognizes Horus on the crocodiles, an Egyptian magical image, and an inscription which together with Salomon and angels calls out: »Sisinnos bisinnos [*sic*], she should not have strength any more.«

In his catalogue of early-Christian gems, Jeffrey Spier shows a rock crystal with a representation of the Haemorrhoïssa at Christ's feet (Fig. 15).[43] Christ does not touch the woman, but his hand hovers protectively over her head. In his article »Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and Their Tradition«, the author also shows two remarkable amulets. The intaglio hanger in silver of the New York Metropolitan Museum is 5 cm high haematite which has the Haemorrhoïssa at Christ's feet on one side, and Mary in Orant on the other side (Fig. 16 a–b).[44] The inscriptions refer, albeit corrupted, to the passage in Mark.[45] Haematite is also called bloodstone and, because of its physical qualities, is connected to the healing of blood illnesses.[46]

An amulet in a private collection in Asia-Minor combines a representation of the Haemorrhoïssa – the inscription reads EMOROYC – on one side, with a head with seven snakes on the other side (Fig. 17).[47] The snakehead is the gorgon and connects the

Fig. 16. Amulet, crystal. New York, America numismatic society, inv. No 307.

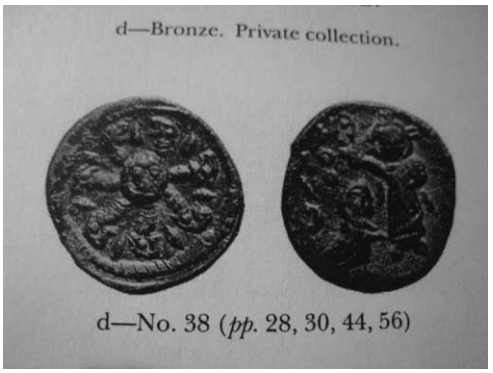

Fig. 17. Hematite amulet, Egypt, late antiquity. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 17.190.491.

Haemorrhoïssa to the *hysteria* motif in the amulets.[48] In fact, according to old traditions Medusa's snakehead was interpreted as one of the many guises of the female womb.[49] During Antiquity, the womb or *hysteria* is imagined as a dangerous apotropaion, with the gorgon as prototype. According to Spier, the amulets with the gorgon are not to be seen as a threat to the womb, but exactly as its portrait. The portrait dispels and exorcises, similar to the way that the name of a demon exorcises him/her.

On amulets that want to exorcise the womb, one often finds the short inscription *Hysterijkon phylaktijrion*.[50] Many inscriptions derive from a lengthier early-Byzantine mother proverb: »Womb, Black. Blackening, as a snake you coil, and as a serpent you hiss, and as a lion you roar and as a lamb, lie down.«[51] The proverb asks the uterus to calm down, to shrink.[52] A sixth-century Coptic papyrus offers an example to control the *hysteria*: »Make the womb of so-and-so, who bore so-and-so, relax into the natural position, and be uninflamed.«[53] Another formula is: »Set the womb of so and so in its proper place, you who lifts up the disk of the sun.«[54] The proverbs were used for a varied range of problems with the uterus: birth, contraception, afterbirth, contractions, severe menstrual bleeding, etc.[55]

The amulets should been seen in the context of the conviction that the uterus is an animated creature, a demon, an animal that needs to be calmed down constantly.[56] The bronze amulet in the British Museum (fifth–sixth century) asks: »Why do you munch like a wolf; why do you devour like a crocodile, why do you bite like a lion, why do you gore like a bull, why do you coil like a serpent, why do you lie down like a tame creature.«[57] In many cases the formulas are accompanied by »Eat and drink blood!«,[58] as the stopping of the bleeding was in many cases absolutely necessary, for instance for the unborn child during pregnancy. The exorcism was meant to make the *demon-hysteria* »devour« the blood.[59] This does not surprise, as the uterus can swell to dangerous proportions, it can hold or reject great quantities of blood. Many proverbs refer to haematite as »bloodstone« or »fossilized blood«.[60] Also in terms of etymology haematite – *hamaithitenai* – refers to »blood that stops«.[61] The history of haematite as a form of »mineral blood« goes back a long way. The fourth-century *Orphica*, a poem about the magical qualities of stones which stretches back to long lost times in Asia, calls haematite Chronos' blood that dripped down from the sky and was kept in stone. The author starts his verses about the haematite with »A leech come down from heaven«.[62]

Early-Byzantine and also Germanic proverbs for Zechariah usually go as follows: »By the great name of the almighty God. The prophet Zacharias was slaughtered in the temple to the Lord and his blood solidified in the middle of the sanctuary like a Stone. So thou too stop the blood of the servant of God,

congeal disease, as that one and as a Stone, may it be annulled. I exorcise thee by the Faith of Veronica [*Beraioonikij*], blood, that you may not drip further; let us stay good, let us stay in fear; amen. Jesus Christ conquers.«[63] After which believers were to rub some of their own blood on their forehead, for instance with a stalk of straw. Worth note is the fact that Veronica/Berenice is mentioned in the proverb. »Her connection with blood dates not from the miraculous portrait . . . but from the apocryphical legend which identified her with the woman of the bloody issue.« Beraioonikij is the name given to the Haemorrhoïssa from the third-century apocrypha onwards.[64]

Exorcism took place in »Berenice's faith«, referring to the final verses of the synoptic wherein her faith made her well again. The Haemorrhoïssa's power is double – taking power away from Christ and her own powerful faith. It combines the zone of superstition and magic with that of orthodoxy. On that intersection, the Haemorrhoïssa character found the mixed composition that is typical of proverbs and exorcisms. A medieval Latin example goes as such: *Ad sanguinem de naribus sistendum. In Christi nomine in fronte scribis de ipso sanhuine ipsius nomen Beronicae, ipsa est quae dixit: se tetigero fimbriam vestimenti domini mei salvo ero.*[65] The same reference can be found in a formula in a thirteenth-century Greek pharmaceutical manual by Nicolaus Myrepsus. The author copies the passage in Matthew *verbatim*.

In around 360–370, Macarius Magnus writes: »Berenice's great healing has been celebrated in Mesopotamia to this day. For this woman had the moment of her miracle made in bronze in a lively fashion, so that it stayed a recent event and not something from the past.«[66] The name Berenice was connected to the Haemorrhoïssa from before that time. The tradition is also mentioned in the Eusebius' Church History, Book 7, Chapter 18[67] and the homily of Basil the Great (329–379), bishop of Caeserea.[68] The woman who was healed came from the city Paneas in Palestine, and she erected a bronze statue to honour the one who had healed her. The statue was there to prove that Christ was the truth. It would still be there for us to see if Maximinus had not taken it away. The statue is gone, but the gospel spreads the Haemorrhoïssa's story in both East and West. Maximinus' attempts to take this sensitive image out of the witnesses' sight were futile. This speechless image was nothing more than a monument animated by the miracle.

The fact that the Haemorrhoïssa performatively became engaged in exorcism, conjuration, premedical views of haemorrhages and even the problematic of the image venerations during the first Christian empire leads me to reflect on the relationship between the Haemorrhoïssa and sacred space.

4. Blood, touch and space

Blood is a principle of life (Lev. 17: 10–14 and Deut. 12: 13), and because blood carries life it holds the magical power to give and to take. In his *Historia Naturalis*, Pliny the Elder says that there is nothing more remarkable than women's monthly flux. And that they have the strange power to render trees bare, to kill bees and to make metal pliable again. But the female blood is, according to Pliny the Elder, foremost meant for human procreation.[69]

In the text analysis of this article, I have already pointed to the interpretation problems of the Haemorrhoïssa passage in the context of the Jewish and Antique taboo of the menstruating woman. In the apotropaic

amulets, it became clear how his woman was gradually charged with the fears of, and fascinations with, the »wild uterus«. In the present section, I will focus on the spatial liminality of the Haemorrhoïssa. How are we to understand the development and the *Nachleben* of this woman in the light of the spatial boundaries that come to the fore in the blood taboo, keeping in mind that the Christian sacred space is also a space of blood: sacrificial blood? How has the confrontation of both blood entities – the first being physical and feminine, the second being dogmatic and masculine – expressed itself in contemporary texts and images, and was the Haemorrhoïssa then staged as an exemplum?

In research on the relationship between blood and space in the early Christian times in the Latin West and the Greek East, Joan Branhan steps forward as an important expert.[70] In early-Christian days there was tension between a very far-reaching taboo of the menstruating woman in Jewish circles and the attitude and reactions of Christians towards these Jewish views with which they came into contact.[71] The story of Hekhalot Rabbati 18 (third–fourth century) is typical of the Jewish obsession. A rabbi travels through heaven but is hurled onto the earth by another rabbi who had a small piece of wool on his knee that was touched by a menstruating woman.[72] In Judaism menstrual blood is always impure; it is the consequence of the fall of man.[73]

In the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, a third-century Syrian text, the author again tries to convince newly converted Jewish women not to withdraw from their place in the community while menstruating: »In like manner also you shall not separate those (women) who are in the wonted courses; for she also who had the flow of blood was not chidden when she touched the skirt of our Saviour's cloak, but was even vouchsafed the forgiveness of all her sins. And when (your wives) suffer those issues which are according to nature, have a care that, in a manner that is right, you cleave to them; for you know that they are your members« (26, 62, 5).[74] In the same third century, however, Dionysius of Alexandria (+264), a student of Origen, says quite the opposite: »Concerning women in their menstrual separation, whether it is right to them in such a condition to enter the house of God, I think it is unnecessary even to inquire. For I think that they, being faithful impious, would not dare in such a condition either to approach the home table or to touch the body and blood of Christ«.[75] In his argument, Dionysius explicitly refers to the woman that touched Christ's hem.[76] The author sees the hem as the flesh itself, and thus follows the path of taboo even further: the Christian altar space is as sensitive to blood impurity as the Jewish temple space.[77] In Dionysius' text, the problem seems to be focused on the Eucharist (the altar), whereas the author of the *Didascalia* speaks in more general terms about isolation in the family and thus does not necessarily refer to a sacred context. Dionysius' text, nonetheless, has unveiled a specific concern in the third century about the contamination of »rivalrous bloods in the same space«.[78] Also Hippolytus of Rome (*c.*170–*c.*236) says that the menstruating woman will be isolated and, remarkably, he too refers to the impact of the Eucharist as a barrier, a boundary to the sacred space.[79] In the fifth century, pope Gelasius also advises priests to keep a safe distance from menstruating *conhospitae*.[80]

The controversy of the *menses* and the sacred space remains. When in 597 Augustine of Canterbury asks whether a menstruating

woman may receive communion, Gregory the Great answers as follows: »A woman must not be prohibited from entering a church during her usual periods, for this natural overflowing cannot be reckoned a crime. If the woman who was suffering from the issue of blood humbly came behind the Lord's back and touched the hem of his garment ... was justified in her boldness, why is it that what was permitted to one woman, was not permitted to all women? A woman ought not to be forbidden to receive the mystery of the Holy Communion at these times. If they do not venture to approach the sacrament of the Body ... when they are in their periods, they are to be praised for their right thinking«.[81] In 688, Theodore of Tarus says that menstruating women are under no pretence to take the communion, and also asks for a waiting period after giving birth.[82] Jonas of Orléans says in his *De institutione laicali*: »Women do not enter the church during carnal impurity«.[83] In short, a bridge is made from the paleo-Christian period to Western Europe, whereby »symbolically bloody realms remain inaccessible to physically bloody women«.[84]

Let us return to the iconography of the Haemorrhoïssa. In numerous examples, the episode is brought into the sacred space of the church itself: in the catacomb of Peter and Marcellinus (*c.*340), in the San Appolinare of Ravenna (sixth century) (Fig. 18), in Reichenau in Constance (*c.* 1000) (Fig. 19), in the mosaic of the Monreale cathedral of 1182–1190 (Fig. 20) and in the fourth-century mosaics of the Kariye Djami, Istanbul (Fig. 21).[85] As it is part of a conventional cycle of miracles, it is hard to recover whether for contemporary onlookers the Haemorrhoïssa also functioned as a (subversive) message with regard to the sacred boundaries. I will take a closer look at the catacomb scene of Peter and Marcellinus, and the Kariye Djami mosaic, where the Haemorrhoïssa appears without the context of a cycle of miracles.

The Haemorrhoïssa of the catacomb is not isolated. It should be connected to the sister scene of the Agape (Fig. 22).[86] In this scene a woman ministers the sacrificial meal. In her

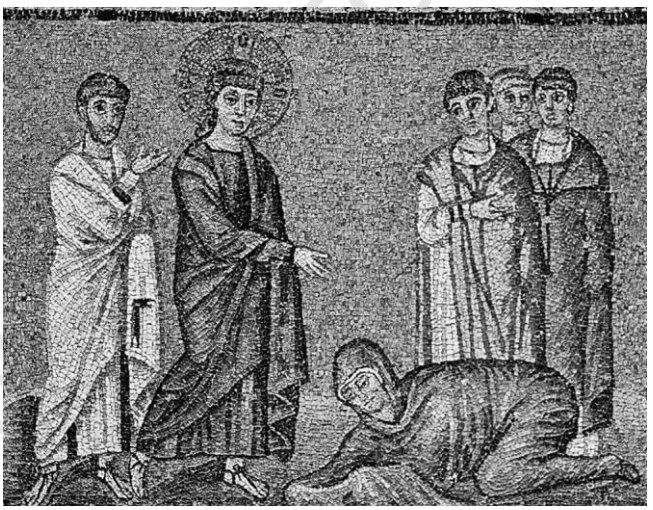

Fig. 18. ***Christ and the Haemorrhoissa*, mosaic, 520–526. Ravenna, S. Apollinare Nuovo.**

Fig. 19. *Christ and the Haemorrhoissa*, mural, *c.*1000. Reichenau, Konstanz.

hands she holds the chalice with wine. This prefiguration of the Eucharist, headed by a priestess, influences the image of the Haemorrhoïssa in the same space. Both scenes refer to the holiest in the form of the body of Christ. Both women are connected to that Holiest, and both women are associated with a fluid: the *fons sanguinis* and the wine or the blood of Christ. In both scenes blood plays a role – subcutaneous for the Haemorrhoïssa, and symbolical for the Agape. The blood is contrastive: impure female blood versus hypostatic sacrificial blood. But at the same time, the story of the Haemorrhoïssa supersedes that opposition.

The Haemorrhoïssa's story is not merely a story of the crossing of boundaries – both sacredly-spatially (the hem) and tactilely (the touching by the *zabâ*) – but also a story of her miraculous healing and her recovery to total purity through Christ. The Haemorrhoïssa's body can finally become part of the pure body that is the young church. Her dried up well can now move towards a different fluxus of salvation: the blood of Christ that also flows for her. In short: the haemorrhaging woman becomes »whole« in that participation, which is what comes forward in especially the last verse of this passage (Mark 4: 34, Luke 8: 48, Mathew 9: 22): »your faith has made you well«.

Fig. 20. *Christ and the Haemorrhoissa*, mosaic, 1182–1190. Monreale, duomo.

Fig. 21. *Christ and the Haemorrhoissa*, mosaic, fourteenth century. Istanbul, Kariye Djamai.

The interpretation of the Haemorrhoïssa as faith was supported by the patristics, more specifically in contrast with Mary Magdalene of the *Noli me tangere*. The tension with regards to touching/not-touching was intertextually acknowledged. In his *Explanatio psalmorum* XII (24, 2), Ambrose explains the *Noli me tangere* as an incomplete state of faith in comparison with the Haemorrhoissa, who because of her complete submission to faith is permitted to touch Christ's mantle.[87]

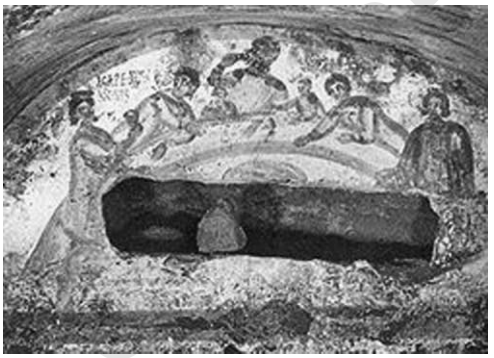

Fig. 22. *Agape*, mural in the catacomb of SS Peter and Marcellinus, third century. Rome.

In his *De fide libri V ad Gratianum Augustum* (14, 90), he describes the *Noli me tangere* as a gate too small for the capacity of faith in Christ.[88] Augustine (354–430) explains the *Noli me tangere* in his *Sermo* 246 and *Epistola* 120 as the transition from faith in Christ the man to faith in Christ as God.[89] Touch implies belief in Christ's divine nature; for this reason the Haemorrhoissa is allowed to touch Christ's mantle. Augustine elaborates on this opposition in his discussion of Thomas (*Sermo* 375C), who touches for lack of faith. Thomas has yet to do what Mary had already done in verse 16 (»Rabboni«): namely, recognize Christ in His divine manifestation.

The Haemorrhoïssa of the »whole« body lifts up the Haemorrhoïssa that is diseased and socially isolated in the exemplum of faith. There are, in other words, two haemorrhaging women: the first one a crawling outcast, the second one a disciple who has gained awareness.[90] In the example of the catacomb of Peter and Marcellinus, the second Haemorrhoïssa is portrayed. It is remarkable that in this stage of the Haemorrhoïssa's transformation the touching no longer plays a role. Faith has come about, the touch has been withdrawn. If we adopt this line of reasoning for the Ravenna mosaic, we recognize a similar final scene wherein Christ has already turned towards the woman and addresses her. Physical contact between them is not, or is no longer, present. Still, however, the Haemorrhoïssa is not yet the erect, proud »restored« woman but a completely veiled corpus. An earlier fraction of the text is still operative here. The woman makes herself small after the formula *venit et procidit*. The covered hands refer to impurity rules. Relics, for example, were only to be touched with a piece of cloth. Visually, the text and the

gesture connect with the convention of the *proskynese* before the Holiest. The Ravenna Haemorrhoïssa reverses the text's point of departure. It thematizes Christ's untouchability,[91] a reversal that takes place as soon as Christ turns round and, indeed, finds her, recognizes her, and heals her in the word.[92]

The fourteenth-century Istanbul mosaic immediately shows a greater ambiguity and a remarkable emotionality.[93] The Haemorrhoïssa is represented as an outcast that plods along in the dust. Her robe covers her body, making her look like an amorphous creature. In contrast with the serenity that is present in the catacomb of Peter and Marcellinus, the emotional *punctum* is central here, showing the moment that the Haemorrhoïssa grabs the hem and Christ looks back. She surrenders herself to this last straw with her entire body. The contours of her body meander into the earth itself. Hem to hem, the Haemorrhoïssa forms a bridge between two groups: the disciples to the left, and the Jews of the Jarius episode to the right. The Haemorrhoïssa quite literally seems to establish a bridge between the old laws and the New Covenant, between Leviticus and the Faith in Christ. The scene is incorporated in a pendant of the dome (see Fig. 21), which is a not unimportant place in the church: above the altar, near the heavenly Jerusalem and Christ of the parousia. This Haemorrhoïssa can shine in her role of connection, healing, surrender and faith. Here too the iconography contrasts sharply with other contemporary sources.

Still, however, Matthew Blastares of Thessaloniki boldly reasserted canonical laws in the fourteenth century (*Syntagma*, 1335) and said that women who had their monthly flow were denied access to the altar: »The woman with a flow of blood did not even dare to touch the lord short of the border of his outer-garments«.[94] Earlier, in the twelfth century, Theodore Balsamon (+ after 1195) had even suggested a separate vestibule for women in their *menses*.[95] The negative exemplum of the Haemorrhoïssa was never able to prevent the representation of the haemorrhaging woman in sacred spaces.[96] Maybe the Kariye Djami mosaic says something about how these laws, even though they explicitly used the Haemorrhoïssa as an example, operated in a world that was separate from the images.[97] An iconographic programme was foremost directed by the Bible and the interpretations of those evangelical texts.[98] It goes without question, however, that the Haemorrhoïssa was subject to conflicting traditions from the early Middle Ages onwards, which makes her character a very ambivalent one. One can wonder: what does a woman think about when she sees this scene above her; and what goes on in Matthew Blastares of Thessaloniki's mind when he sees this woman looking upwards to what is represented above her? And what does Matthew Blastares think when he sees his neighbour wearing the *hysteria* amulet with the Haemorrhoïssa on it?

5. Conclusion

The iconography of the healing of the Haemorrhoïssa relates to the story of the synoptics by isolating or compressing different moments while other elements of the story were authentically visually ignored. This results in an economical and concise representation of the well-known Christian visual force fields of touching, seeing and corporeal interaction. The touching of the hem is a crucial element in the text and as such is also often present in the iconography. The single touching of the hem is sometimes rendered as a twofold

moment together with Christ's touching of the woman's head. This procedure connects the moment of healing with Christ's words to the woman's act of despair. There are also a significant number of examples wherein the touching of the hem is completely absent: the touching has, as it were, already happened, and the artist focuses on the story's ending: your faith has made you well. In these cases Christ's touching and His gaze are no longer an anachronism.

The syntax of the corporeal interaction between the Haemorrhoïssa and Christ consists largely of a discrepancy and an inversion. The discrepancy is expressed in the scrawny, sometimes even shrivelled body of the woman and the proudly erect Christ. The Haemorrhoïssa is always located in the lower parts of the composition and she is sometimes rendered too small in proportion with the other human figures. This disturbance in the proportions does indeed emphasize the fears, the secrecy and the isolation of the woman. In a number of cases the woman kneels down on one knee and her emotions of inferiority are neutralized.

The approach from the back usually has a negative meaning: it points to the social prohibitions of the outcast or a creeping up on the enemy. Where there is no watchful eye, there is a loss of control and the danger of the other. The back view also represents the past and amnesia. For those reasons, an enormous tension radiates from the back, as in the story of Orpheus, who loses his beloved in death by turning round and breaking the taboo of the back. The moment of turning round – *conversus* – also is a turning point in the narrative space: the magic and the touching are as it were broken through, and Christ now controls the situation in seeing and speaking. In the early-Christian visual tradition, that control formed a primordial interpretation, so Christ is not represented from the back view as the Haemorrhoïssa approached him, but frontally or in profile, from our perspective as spectators.

The Haemorrhoïssa's miracle of healing becomes engaged in the magical-medical world, and settles itself in the *hysteria* field. At the level of sarcophaguses this can in fact not be noticed, but the Haemorrhoïssa *hysteria* does appear in late-antique and early-Byzantine exorcistic proverbs, intaglios and protective amulets. The uterus connects to the phantasm of animal-like estranging behaviour: it roars, swells, shrinks and crawls. This reveals an existent interaction between the textual miracle and magical practices.

In the case of the blood of the Haemorrhoïssa, a negative position is assumed, which, however, constantly shifts. Within the story itself, for starters, there is a turning point: the bad haemorrhaging dries up. In the iconography, this transformation is represented as a crawling touching woman, which contrasts with the blessed woman at the end of the story. The ambivalence of the blood also reflects the transition of Jewish impurity laws to the Christian teachings of healing. These bring the Haemorrhoïssa to the world of magic and the sympathological pre-medical world: exorcising blood with blood. This tension around the blood culminates in the sacred space where the Haemorrhoïssa and her miraculous healing are put in relationship with the Holiest blood of the Eucharist.

Endnotes

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era of modernity – funded by the Research Funds of the Catholic University Leuven (2008–2012). I am grateful to my team Liesbet Kusters, Emma Sidgwick and Lise De Greef.

1. For all biblical quotations, I will use the *New Revised Standard Version*.

2. The Haemorrhoïssa is discussed in the following exegetic and bible historical studies: F. Bovon, *L'évangile selon saint Luc*, Commentaire du Nouveau Testamente (Genève, 1991), 3a: 431–440; M.R. D'Angelo, »Gender and Power in the Gospel of Mark. The Daughter of Jairus and the Woman with the Flow of Blood«, in *Miracles in Jewish and Christian Antiquity. Imagining Truth*, Notre Dame Studies in Theology, ed. J.C. Cavadini (Notre Dame, IN, 1999), 3: pp. 83–109; C. Fonrobert, »The Woman with a Blood-Flow (Mark 5.24–34) Revisited. Menstrual Laws and Jewish Culture in Christian Feminist Hermeneutics«, in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel. Investigations and Proposals*, JSNTS, 148 – Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity, eds C.A. Evans and J.A. Sanders, Sheffield, 1997, 5: pp. 121–140; F.T. Gench, *Back to the Well. Women's Encounters with Jesus in the Gospels*, Louisville, 2004, 28–55; S. Haber, »A Woman's Touch. Feminist Encounters with the Hemorrhaging Woman in Mark 5.24–34«, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, Vol. 26, No. 2, 2003, pp. 171–192; R.A. Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story. The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel*, Louisville, 2001; G. Lemarquand, *An Issue of Relevance. A Comparative Study of the Story of the Bleeding Woman (Mk 5:25–34; Mt 9:20–22; Lk 8:43–48) in North Atlantic and African Contexts*, New York, 2004; A.-J. Levine, »Discharging Responsibility. Matthean Jesus, Biblical Law and Hemorrhaging Woman«, in *Treasure New and Old. Recent Contributions to Matthean Studies*, ed. D.R. Bauer and M.A. Powell, Atlanta, 1996, pp. 379–397; J. Marcus, *Mark 1–8. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, New York, 2000; H. Melzer-Keller, *Jesus und die Frauen. Eine Verhältnisbestimmung nach den synoptischen Überlieferungen*, Herders biblische Studien, Freiburg 1997, vol. 14; D. Oppel, *Heilsam erzählen – erzählend heilen. Die Heilung der Blutflüssigen und die Erweckung der Jairustochter in Mk 5,21–43 als Beispiel markinischer Erzählfertigkeit*, Bonner biblische Beiträge, Weinheim, 1995, vol. 12; J. Plaskow, »Antijudaism in feminist Christian Interpretation«, in *Searching the Scriptures. A Feminist Introduction*, ed. E. Schüssler Fiorenza, New York, 1993, pp. 117–129; E. Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her. A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*, New York, 1994, p. 124; M.J. Selvidge, *Woman, Cult, and Miracle Recital. A redactional Critical Investigation on Mark 5: 24–34*, London, 1990; M.J. Selvidge, »Mark 5:25–34 and Leviticus. A reaction to Restrictive Purity regulations«, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 104, No. 4, 1984, pp. 619–623; T. Söding, *Glaube bei Markus. Glaube an das Evangelium, Gebetsglaube und Wunderglaube im Kontext der markinischen Basileiatheologie und Christologie*, Stuttgarter Biblische Beiträge, Stuttgart, 1985, 1987, 12: pp. 414–421; E. Struthers Malbon, »Narrative criticism. How does the story mean?«, in *Mark and Method. New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, ed. J.C. Anderson and S.D. Moore, Minneapolis, 1992, pp. 37–29; J. Wilkinson, *The Bible and Healing. A Medical and Theological Commentary*, Grand Rapids, 1998; P. Trummer, *Die Blutende Frau. Wunderheilung im Neuen Testament*, Freiburg, 1991, pp. 15–21.

3. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, pp. 364–366.

4. Ibid., p. 366.

5. One could ask whether the Haemorrhoïssa is cured by the installation of a menopause: her source dried up; R. Formanek, ed., *The Meanings of Menopause. Historical, Medical and Clinical Perspective*, Hillsdale, 1990.

6. See notes 35–36.

7. Wilkinson, *The Bible and Healing*, p. 105.

8. D. Rhoads, »Jesus and the Syrophoenician Woman. A narrative-critical Study«, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. 62, No. 2, 1994, pp. 343–375, is seen by some authors as a similar initiative, but in this case the Greek woman throws herself at Christ's feet to demand the healing of her daughter, Mark 7: 24–30.

9. R. Bieringer, »'Nader Mij niet': De betekenis van *mê mou haptou* in Johannes 20:17«, *HTS Teologiese Studies, No. Theological Studies*, 61, 2005, 19–43.

10. P.J. Lalleman, »Healing by a Mere Touch as a Christian Concept«, *Tyndale Bulletin*, Vol. 48, No. 2, 1997, pp. 335–361. See also: R. Grob, »Berühren«, in *Theologisches Begriffslexikon zum Neuen Testament*, ed. L. Coenen, Wuppertal, 1967, pp. 85–86.

11. W. Cotter, *Miracles in Greco-Roman Antiquity. A Sourcebook*, London, 1999, p. 246.

12. This contrasts with Fonrobert, »The Woman with a Blood-Flow (Mark 5.24–34) Revisited«, p. 127, which says that »healing by touch is also a common element in hellenistic healing stories«.

13. H.C. Kee, *Medicine, Miracle and Magic in New Testament Times*, Cambridge, 1984, pp. 2–4; Cotter, *Miracles in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, p. 246; H.C. Kee, *Miracle in the early Christian World. A Study in Sociohistorical Method*, New Haven, 1983, pp. 162–163.

14. C.D. Marshall, *Faith as a Theme in Mark's Narrative*, Society for New Testament Studies. Monograph Series, Cambridge, 1989, 64: pp. 106–108; E.E. May, »For Power Went Forth from Him . . . (Luke 6:19) «, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1952, pp. 93–103, 98.

15. Also see: H. van der Loos, *The Miracles of Jesus*, Novum Testamentum Supplementum, Leiden, 1965, 9: p. 510.

16. Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, p. 208.

17. A well-balanced position in this can be found in Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, p. 357, and A.T. Robertson and W.J. Perschbacher, *Word Pictures of the New Testament*, Vol. 1: *Matthew and Mark*, Grand Rapids, 2004, passim.

18. Which, moreover, is Marla Selvidge's major argument in the issue of anti-Judaism in this passage.

19. C. Ginzburg, *A distance. Neuf essais sur le point de vue en histoire*, Paris, 1998, 101: »Ces images, concentrées sur le punctum, sur l'instant décisif«.

20. T.F. Mathews, *The Clash of Gods. A Reinterpretation of Early Christian Art*, Princeton, 1993, p. 63 ff.

21. C. Nauerth, »Heilungswunder in der frühchristlichen Kunst, in Spätantike und frühes Christentum«, in *Spätantike und frühes Christentum*, ed. H. Beck and P.C. Bol, Frankfurt am Main, 1983, pp. 339–446; T.F. Mathews, *The Clash of Gods*, pp. 54–65; G. Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, Vol. 1: *Christ's Incarnation, Childhood, Baptism, Temptation, Transfiguration, Works and Miracles*, trans. J. Seligman, London, 1971; A. Grabar, *Christian Iconography. A Study of Its Origins*, Princeton, 1968; J. Elsner, *Art and the Roman Viewer: The Transformation of Art from the Pagan World to Christianity*, Cambridge, 1995; K. Weitzmann, »The Late Roman World«, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin. New Series*, Vol. 35, No. 2, 1977, 2–96; R. Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art*, London, 2000; D. Knipp, *Christus medicus in der früchristlichen Sarkophagskulptur: ikonographische Studien der Sepulkralkunst des späten vierten Jahrhunderts*, Leiden, 1998.

22. The image interpretation of early-Christian art here hermeneutically follows the modern interpretation by exegetes.

23. Nauerth, »Heilungswunder in der frühchristlichen Kunst«, fig. 157, shows a similar iconography on a contemporary, Roman sarcophagus.

24. R. Mellinkoff, *Outcasts. Signs of Otherness in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages*, Berkeley, 1993, 1: pp. 220–222, treats the back perspective in iconography as a sign of isolation from society. The author refers mostly to the case of Mary Magdalene. Also see my article: »*Noli me tangere*. Narrative and iconic space«, in *Jerusalem as Narrative Space*, eds A. Hofmann and G. Wolf, Firenze, 2009, in press.

25. C.J. Watson, »The Program of the Brescia Casket«, *Gesta*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1981, pp. 283–298, with bibliography.

26. Inv. Nr. Pb 35; Mathews notices that the cock is Asclepius' sacrificial animal, *The Clash of Gods*, 66. Christ often takes the place of the Asclepius figure; B. Baert, »The Pool of Bethsaïda. The Cultural History of a Holy Place in Jerusalem«, *Viator. Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, Vol. 36, 2005, pp. 1–22.

27. Reichenau, late tenth century, München, Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Lat. Cim 58, fol. 44; A. Boeckler, *Ikonographische studien zu den Wunderscenen der Ottonischen Malerei des Reichenau*, München, 1961, p. 9 and figs 10–14; F. Dressler and F. Mutherick, eds, *Das Evangeliar Otto III Clm 4453 der bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München*, Munich, 1978; K. Schulmeyer, »Evangeliar Otto's III«, in *Europas Mitte um 1000*, Council of Europe Art Exhibition, 27, ed. A. Wieczorek and H.-M. Hinz, Stuttgart, 2000, 1: pp. 456–457.

28. Trier, Stadtbibliothek, codex 24, fol. 91; H. Schiel, *Codex Egberti der Stadtbibliothek Trier*, Basel, 1960; F.J. Ronig, »Erläuterungen zu den Miniaturen des Egbert Codex«, in *Der Egbert Codex. Das Leben Jesu. Ein Höhepunkt der Buchmalerei vor 1000 Jahren*, S.D. Dornheim et al., Stuttgart, 2005, p. 78 e.v.

29. On the genesis of visual conventions, see: J. Bremmer, »Walking, Standing, and Sitting in Ancient Greek Culture«, in *A Cultural History of Gesture*, eds J. Bremmer and H. Roodenburg, Ithaca, NY, 1993, pp. 15–35; B. Baert and L. Kusters, »The Twilight Zone of the *Noli me tangere*. Contributions to the History of the motif, ca. 400–ca. 1000) in the West«, *Louvain Studies*, Vol. 32, 2007, pp. 255–308; M. Barasch, *Giotto and the Language of Gesture*, Cambridge, 1987.

30. As seen on an ivory from Munich dating to *c.*400, myrrhophores, See T. Mueller, *Kunst und Kunsthandwerk. Meisterwerke im Bayerischen Nationalmuseum, München. Festschrift zum 100–jährigen bestehen des Museums, 1855–1955*, Munich, 1955, cat., p. 3; C. Stiegemann and M. Wemhoff, eds, *799. Kunst und Kultur der Karolingerzeit. Karl der Grosse und Papst Leo III in Paderborn*, Tl. 2, Mainz am Rhein, 1999, cat., p. X.2, and the so-called Apostle Sarcophagus (*Chairete*) from the same period, see known through an engraving in A. Bosio, *Roma Sotterranea*, Rome, 1651, and P. Aringhi, *Roma subterranea novissima*, Rome, 1659.

31. A. Reinhartz, *Why ask my Name? Anonimity and Identity in Biblical Narrative*, Oxford, 1998, p. 188.

32. Due to the sometimes ambiguous poses, the Haemorrhoïssa has sometimes been confused with the *Noli me tangere* in secondary literature, as for the mural painting in the Petrus and Marcellinus catacomb; the Brescia reliquary, and the so-called capsa of Brivio, the latter in G. Noga-Banai, *The Trophies of the Martyrs. An Art Historical Study of Early Christian Silver Reliquaries*, Oxford, 2008, pp. 38–61, fig. 3. In all three cases there are indeed no disciples present. The kneeling position of the woman and the pointing gesture by Christ can be read as a tactile gesture on the one hand (cf. the *Chairete*, and a rather dismissive gesture, cf. *Noli me tangere*) on the other. Christ's twisted torso too can cause confusion in comparison with the Christ that is turning away in *Noli me tangere*. We are convinced, however, that an independent iconographical motif of the *Noli me tangere* did not exist before Carolingian times.

33. B. Baert, »The healing of the blind man at Siloam, Jerusalem. A contribution to the relationship between holy places and the visual arts in the Middle Ages, Pt. I«, *Arte Cristiana*, Vol. 838, 2007, pp. 49–60; Vol. 839, 2007, pp. 121–130.

34. Baert, »The Pool of Bethsaïda«, pp. 1–22.

35. Knipp, *Christus medicus*, pp. 124–125.

36. Mathews, *The Clash of Gods*, pp. 65–66.

37. Mathews, *The Clash of Gods*, p. 68.

38. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, I: 67; ibid., p.68.

39. Asterius of Amasia, *Homily 1*, PG 40, cols 165–168; in C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453. Sources and Documents*, Englewood Cliffs, 1972, p. 51.

40. Mathews, *The Clash of Gods*, fig. 40, 60: here too the author identifies a raising of Lazarus in combination with the Haemorrhoïssa.

41. J. Spier, *Late Antique and Early Christian Gems*, Wiesbaden, 2007; J. Spier, »Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and Their Tradition«, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol. 56, 1993, pp. 25–62; R.K. Ritner, »A Uterine Amulet in the Oriental Institute Collection«, *Journal of Near Institute Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 3, 1984, pp. 209–221.

42. A.A. Barb, »Three Elusive Amulets«, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol. 27, 1964, pp. 1–22, p. 10; fig. 2a–b.

43. J. Spier, *Late antique*, cat., p. 684 a and b: New York, America numismatic society, rock crystal, 30–20–4 cm.

44. J. Spier, »Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and Their Tradition« «, p. 44, fig. 6b, inv. no. 1917, sixth–seventh century; also shown by L. Kötzsche, *Age of Spirituality. Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century*, ed. K. Weitzmann, Princeton, 1979, p. 440, and Nauerth, referentie ontbreekt, op. cit. mag niet, 560, cat., p. 165. In note 111, p. 44, Spier also refers to the Benaki museum in Athens, were a green Chalkedon intaglio from the middle–Byzantine age is being kept with the Haemorrhoïssa and the Crucifixion on it, without inscription. Haematite is an iron ore that is not particularly rare. Characteristic for this stone is its red core, but once processed, sharpened or polished, it turns black to silvery.

45. See M. Frazer and K. Weitzman, eds, *The Age of Spirituality*, New York, 1977, p. 440.

46. C. Meier, *Gemma Spiritualis. Methode und Gebrauch der Edelsteinallegorese vom frühen Christentum bis ins 18. Jahrhundert*, München, 1977, pp. 392–395.

47. J. Spier, »Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and Their Tradition«, pp. 28, 30, 44, 56; 44: »The bronze token with the haemorhoïssa suggests that it had to help women in some way«.

48. I. Veith, *Hysteria. The History of a Disease*, Chicago, 1965.

49. M. Pointon, »Interior Portraits. Women, Physiology and the Male Artist«, *Feminist Review*, Vol. 22, 1986, pp. 5–22.

50. J. Spier, »Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and Their Tradition«, as in fig. 40 – 4d: silver ring, and also on a leaden amulet, both Corinthian.

51. Ibid., p. 30.

52. Ibid., p. 43, often this portrait is octopus-like.

53. Ibid., p. 43.

54. Ibid., p. 43.

55. There is an abundance of literature available on the uterus and menstruation in the premedical world: S.E. Cayleff, »She Was Rendered Incapacitated by Menstrual Difficulties. Historical Perspectives on Perceived Intellectual and Physiological Impairment Among Menstruating Women«, in *Menstrual Health in Women's Lives*, eds A.J. Dan and L.L. Lewis, Urbana, IL, 1992, pp. 229–235; L. Dean–Jones, »Menstrual Bleeding According to the Hippocratics and Aristotle«, *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, Vol. 119, 1989, pp. 177–192; M. Green, »Female Sexuality in the Medieval West«, *Trends in History*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1990, pp. 127–158; A.E. Hanson, »Hippocrates. Diseases of Women I«, *Signs*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1975, pp. 567–584; M.C. Horowitz, »Aristotle and Woman«, *Journal of the History of Biology*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1976, pp. 183–213, reveals Aristotle's biological and political sexism. For another viewpoint, see J. Morsink, »Was Aristotle's Biology Sexist?«, *Journal of the History of Biology*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 1979, pp. 83–112; D. Jacquart, C. Thomasset and M. Adamson, trans., *Sexuality and Medicine in the Middle Ages*, Princeton, 1988; J. Delancy, M.J. Lupton and E. Toth, *The Curse. A Cultural History of Menstruation*, New York, 1976; Formanek, ed., *The Meanings of Menopause.*

56. According to Barb, »Three Elusive Amulets«, Pl. 6a, these ideas go back to Mesopotamian archetypes. The amulets also protect men that were infected by a »womb«, like the one (plate 6a) for the Russian Basileos. Also see: J.-J. Aubert, »Threatened Wombs: Aspects of Ancient Uterine Magic«, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, Vol. 30, 1989, pp. 421–449; C.W. Bodemer, »Historical Interpretations of the Human Uterus and Cervix Uteri«, in *The Biology of the Cervix*, ed. R.J. Blandau and K. Moghissi, Chicago, 1983, pp. 1–11; S. Griffin, *Woman and Nature. The Roaring Inside Her*, New York, 1978.

57. Spier, »Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and Their Tradition« (juist werk? Heb op. cit. gewist) p. 45. AQ3

58. Ibid., p. 46.

59. Other examples in Ritner, »A Uterine Amulet in the Oriental Institute Collection«, passim.

60. AA. Barb, »St. Zacharias the Prophet and Martyr. A Study in Charms and Incantations«, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol. 11, 1948, pp. 35–67, 63 and 67.

61. Meier, *Gemma Spiritualis*, 394: »Hematites (...) dicitur ab hema, quod est sanguis, et tithein, quod est sistere, quasi sistens sanguinem«, after Petrus Berchorius, *c.*1290–1362, *Reductorium morale* XI, 440a. In these same passages Berchorius attributes the haemorrhage to »luxuria«, to »carnalis voluptas, mundana prosperitas, fluxusque cujuscunque iniquitatis«, and thereby refers to the passage in Mark. »Figura de haemorrhoissa, quae ad tactum vestimenti Christi a fluxu sanguinis est sanata. Vestimentum Christi est abstinentia, quae re vera sanat ab istis fluxibus animam peccatricem.« The connection between the illness and sin, at least in the late Middle Ages, requires further research.

62. E Abel, ed., *Orphica*, Leipzig, 1885, verses 642 ff.; Barb, »St. Zacharias«, p. 67.

63. O. Ebermann, *Blut- und Wundsegen in ihrer Entwicklung dargestellt*, Palaestra 24, Berlin, 1903; Barb, »St. Zacharias«, pp. 38–42; There are instances wherein the daughter of the Canaanite woman (Matthew 15.22) is also called Berenice. In Henry III's book of pericopes, 1039–143, Bremen, Staatsbibliothek M. (is dit »manuscript«? Dan MS.) 21, fol. 28v, features the haemorrhaging woman at the bottom, and the episode of the Canaanite woman in the top register. In this latter Christ is also approached from the back.

64. Barb, »St. Zacharias«, p. 42; M.R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, Oxford, 1924, p. 102: Bernice; 183: Beronice; 306: Berenice; and 157: Veronica. The name would also become an exorcism for various problems. It is also used for fine nitrate.

65. Barb, »St. Zacharias«, p. 43, note 1; E. von Steinmeyer, *Die kleineren althochdeutschen Sprachdenkmäler*, Deutsche Neudrucke. Texte des Mittelalters, Berlin, 1916.

66. Nikephorus Callistus, thirteenth century (*Historia Ecclesiaticae* X. 30) quotes Macarius Magnes in his *Antirrhétiques: Discours contre les iconoclastes*, ed. M.-J. Baudinet-Mondzain, Paris, 1989. Theophylactus, end ninth century, repeats Eusebius in his *Enarratio in Evangelium Matthaei*, IX, Migne PG 123, cols 230–231. Sozomenos, *c.*400–*c.*50, *Historia Ecclesiasticae* (V. 21) and Philostorgios, pp. 368–430, *Historia Ecclesiasticae* (VII. 3) both mention that when Julian the Apostate removed the statue and replaced it with his, it was destroyed by lightning; Fabre, *L'image possible*, p. 242. Nikephorus compresses the event by claiming that the statue was cast by the woman herself instead of on commission. Pierre-Antoine Fabre speaks of a densification of the Haemorrhoïssa at the level of the text, but also at the level of the visual anthropology: »un double phénomène d'incorporation et de débordement: la femme incorpore la force venue du Christ et c'est cette incorporation qui, en arrêtant le flux, entensifie le corps, au lieu qu'il soit dilué par l'écoulement du sang, et rend possible une image définie, . . .«, Fabre, *L'image possible*, p. 244.

67. Eusebius of Caesarea, *Histoire écclesiastique*, trans. G. Bardy, Paris, 1955, pp. 191–192; R. Brugge, »*Effigiem Christi, qui transis, semper honora.* Verses condemning the cult of sacred images in art and literature«, *Acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia*, Vol. VI, 1975, pp. 127–139; E. von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder. Untersuchungen zur christlichen Legenden*, Leipzig, 1899, pp. 31 and 197; P.-A. Fabre, »L'image possible. Réflexions sur le défaut d'illustration dans les écrits prescriptifs et défensifs sur l'image au XVIe siècle«, in *Emblemata sacra. Rhétorique et herméneutique du discours sacré en images. The Rhetoric and Hermeneutics of Illustrated Sacred Discourse*, Imago Figurata Studies, eds R. Dekonick and A. Guiderdoni-Bruslé, Turnhout, 2007, 7: pp. 229–251; Fonrobert, »The Woman with a Blood-Flow (Mark 5.24–34) Revisited«, p. 122; Selvidge, *Woman, Cult, and Miracle Recital*, p. 20.

68. Known through a text by Photius in the ninth century: Fabre, *L'image possible*, p. 237, note 19.

69. Pliny the Elder, *Historia naturale*, 7.15.64, Loeb, 2, p. 549.

70. J.R. Branham, »Sacred Space under Erasure in Ancient Synagogues and Early Churches«, *Art Bulletin*, Vol. 74, No. 3, 1992, pp. 375–394; J.R. Branham, »Blood and Sanctity at Issue«, *Res. Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 31, 1997, pp. 53–70; J.R. Branham, »Frauen und blutige Räume. Menstruation und Eucharistie in Spätantike und Mittelalter«, *Vorträge Warburg-Haus*, 3, 1999, pp. 129–161; J.R. Branham, »Bloody Women and Bloody Spaces«, *Harvard Divinity Bulletin* (e-journal) Volo. 30, No. 06, No. 04; J.R. Branham, »Penetrating the Sacred: Breaches and Barriers in the Jerusalem temple«, in *Thresholds of the Sacred. Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screens, East and West*, ed. S. Gerstel, Cambridge, 2006, pp. 6–24.

71. Also see: E. Amt, »Outsiders. Jewish and Heretic Women«, in *Women's Lives in Medieval Europe. A Sourcebook*, New York, 1993, pp. 279–317; Fonrobert, *Menstrual purity, welk werk van Fonrobert, is eerste full reference weggevallen?*, pp. 160–210: menstrual politics in early Christian literature.

72. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, p. 357; G.G. Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition*, Israel Goldstein Lectures, 1957, New York, 1960, pp. 10–12; I. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*,Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums, Leiden, 1980, 14: p. 164.

73. S. Cohen, »Menstruants and the Sacred in Judaism and Christianity«, in *Women's History and Ancient History*, ed. S.B. Pomeroy, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1991, passim; P. McCracken, *The Curse of Eve, The Wound of the Hero. Blood, Gender and Medieval Literature*, The Middle Ages Series, Philadelphia, PA, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003.

74. R.H. Connely, *Didascalia Apostolorum*, Oxford, 1929, p. 254.

75. Cohen, »Menstruants«, p. 288.

76. PG 10, cola 1281–1282.

77. Branham, »Penetrating the sacred«, passim.

78. Branham, »Bloody women«, p. 8.

79. Cohen, »Menstruants«, p. 288; Branham, »Bloody women«, p. 7; G. Dox, *The Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus*, London, 1968, 20,p. 6.

80. Epistola 14; R. Gryson, *The Ministry of Women in the Early Church*, Collegeville, PA, 1976, p. 53.

81. C.T. Wood, »The Doctor's Dilemma. Sin, Salvation, and the Menstrual Cycle in Medieval Thought», *Speculum*,

Vol. 56, No. 4, 1981, pp. 710–727, 713; *Epistola* 64, Pl. 77, cols 1183–1199.

82. P.J. Payer, *Sex and the Penitentials. The Development of a Sexual Code 550–1150*, Toronto, 1984, p. 36.

83. Pl. 187–188, Ch. 2, col. 106.

84. Branham, »Bloody women«, p. 8.

85. P. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*. Vol. 1: *Historical Introduction and Description of the Mosaics and Frescoes*, New York, 1966, pp. 72–74; N. Teteriatnikov, »The Place of the Nun Melania (the Lady of the Mongols) in the Deesis Inner Narthex of Chora, Constantinople«, *Cahiers Archéologiques*, Vol. 43, 1995, p. 171.

86. C. Corneli, art., *Tre scene di miracoli nel cubilico 65 detto di Nicerus, in L'orizzonte tardoantico e le nuove immagini. 312–468*, Vol. 1, Turnhout, 2006, pp. 138–142; A. McGowan, *Aesthetic Eucharists. Food and Drink in Early Christian Rituals*, Oxford, 1999, pp. 1–89; Also see: R. Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art*, London, 2000; J. Wilpert, *Ein Cyclus christologischer Gemälde aus der Katakombe der Heiligen Petrus und Marcellinus*, Freiburg, 1891, p. 25; C. Osiek, M.Y. MacDonald and J.H. Tulloch, *A Woman's Place. House Churches in Earliest Christianity*, Minneapolis, 2005; J. Fink and B. Asamer, *Die römischen Katakomben*, Mainz am Rhein, 1997.

87. Ambrosius Mediolanensis, »Explanatio psalmorum XII (25, 24, 2)«, in *Sancti Ambrosi Opera 6*, Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum, 64, eds M. Petschenig and M. Zelzer, Vienna, 1999, p. 345.

88. Ambrosius Mediolanensis, »De fide ad Gratianum«, in *De Fide, ad Gratianum*, Fontes christiani, 47, Vol. 1, ed. C. Markschies, Turnhout, 2005, p. 212.

89. R. Teske, transl., and B. Ramsey, ed., *Letters 100–155*, London, 2003, pp. 129–140, 137. See also S. Soennecken, *Misogynie oder Philogynie? Philologisch-theologische Untersuchungen zum Wortfeld Frau bei Augustinus* , Frankfurt am Main, 1993. This line of reasoning is also taken over by Paulinus of Nola (355–431) in his *Epistula* 50: Paulinus Nolanus, *Epistulae. Paulinus von Nola*, Fontes christiani, 25, trans. and ed. Matthias Skeb, Freiburg, 1998, 3: pp. 1042–1075, 1067.

90. The fascination for liquids as juices of life not only has a Eucharistic connotation, but also a funerary one in the catacombs. Wine is the drink of the dead, it drips into the underworld through the earth, says Pliny. Gods and goddesses of the underworld, like Selene, often drink blood; J. Spier, »Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and Their Tradition« «, p. 46.

91. It would lead us too far to follow this line of reasoning to the problem of the *Noli me tangere* and the paradigm of Christ as untouchable Visible Invisibility. For this, see: K. Krüger, *Das Bild als Schleier des Unsichtbaren. Ästhetische Illusion in der Kunst der frühen Neuzeit in Italien*, München, 2001, p. 104; B. Baert, »*Noli me tangere*. Six Exercises in Image Theory and Iconophilia«, *Image and Narrative. L'image des Anciens et l'image des Modernes: Permanence des problématiques*, Vol. 15, 2006, electronic journal with review, http://www.imageandnarrative.be/iconoclasm/baert.htm. It is evident that within the broader issue of the problem of tactility in the Biblical tradition, the Haemorrhoïssa and Mary Magdalene are strongly related prototypes.

92. The concept *conversus* is very charged both nominally and narratively. In Psalm 17.3 it is God who gives us the power to »turn around« to salvation. This phrase has had a great influence on Augustine's confessions; O. Reta, »Conversion«, in *Augustine Through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, ed. A.D. Fitzgerald, Grand Rapids, 1999, p. 239. Also in the *Noli me tangere* episode of John 20, verse 14 (*conversa et retrorsum et videt Iesum*) plays a crucial role. The moment of turning around is a turning point narratively and spiritually: the searching becomes a finding and a seeing, and later in the text it also becomes the insight into Christ's ultimate appearance, namely His resurrected self. In the iconography of the *Noli me tangere* Mary Magdalene's position also entails the concept of the turned around gaze, the so-called »iconic turn«. I develop this in: Baert, »The pact between space and gaze. The narrative and the iconic in *Noli me tangere*«, in *To Tell, to Think and to Experience Images from Theology to Rhetoric and Aesthetics in the Early Modern Period*, eds R. Dekoninck and A. Guiderdoni, Leuven, 2009 (in press). M. Pardo, »The Subject of Savoldo's Magdalene«, *Art Bulletin*, Vol. 71, No. 1, 1989, pp. 67–91, connects the »conversa« issue to some humanistic-aesthetic premises like the *paragone*. In the Haemorrhoïssa episode, however, it is not the woman who has to turn round to come to insight, but rather Christ Himself. On a primary level, His turning round is a reaction to a semi-magical impact of touching, see above, but on a second level Christ's turning round also effectuates a turning round in the woman: that of her healing, and that of faith. In the Haemorrhoïssa episode Christ the Divine exceptionally turns around Himself for the benefit of man. This allows us to understand Christ's »conversus« as the necessary interval, in time (in the text, in the fluxus) to establish a healing in the deepest core that supersedes magic, see above and below (Conclusion).

93. O. Demus, »The Style of the Kariye Djami and Its Place in the Development of Palaeologan Art«, in *The Kariye Djami*, ed. Underwood, pp. 107–160; P. Nikodijm, *Mosaiki mecheti Kakhrie-dzhamisi v Konstantinopole*, Odessa, 1918; R. Nelson, »Taxation with Representation: Visual Narrative and the Political Field at the Kariye Camii«, *Art History*, Vol. 22, 1999, pp. 56–82; R. Nelson, »The Chora and the Great Church: Intervisuality in Fourteenth-Century Constantinople«, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, Vol. 23, 1999, pp. 67–101; D. Oates, »A Summary Report on the Excavations of the Byzantine Institute in the Kariye Djami: 1957 and 1958«, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, Vol. 14, 1960, pp. 223–231; R.G. Ousterhout, »The Architecture of the Kariye Camii in Istanbul«, *Dumbarton Oaks Studies*, Vol. 25, 1987; R.G. Ousterhout, »The Virgin of the Chora«, in *The Sacred Image East and West*, Illinois Byzantine Studies, eds R.G. Ousterhout and L. Brubaker, Urbana,

1995, 4: pp. 91–109; R.G. Ousterhout, »Temporal Structuring in the Chora Parekklesion«, *Gesta*, Vol. 34, 1995, pp. 63–76; R.G. Ousterhout, *The Art of the Kariye Camii*, London, 2002.

94. Alphabetical Collection, A. 16; quoted in: P. Viscuso, »Purity and Sexuality in late Byzantine Theology«, *Orientalia Christiana periodica*, Vol. 57, 1991, p. 401.

95. PG 138, cols 465–468; quoted in: R. Taft, »Women at Church in Byzantium. Where, When – and Why?«, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, Vol. 52, 1990, pp. 50–51. Also see: C. de Miramon, »La fin d'un tabou? L'interdiction de communier pour la femme menstrué au Moyen Âge. Le cas du XIIe siècle«, Le sang au Moyen Âge, *Cahiers du CRISMA*, Vol. 4, 1999.

96. J.R. Branham, »Women as Objects of Sacrifice? An Early Christian 'Chancel of the Virgins'«, in *La cuisine et l'autel. Les Sacrifices en questions dans les sociétés de la Méditerranée ancienne*, eds S. Georgoudi, R.K. Piettre and F. Schmidt, Turnhout, 2006, pp. 371–386.

97. Branham, »Bloody women«, p. 9, connects this mosaic with the presentation of Mary in the Temple in the ceiling of the entrance to the nave. The presentation of the 12-year-old to the High priest also functions as a transition of the Old to the New. At the altar of the Holiest, the inscription is »*Ta hagia toon hagioon*«. The young Mary at the beginning of her fertility forms a contrast with the woman who suffered from haemorrhages for 12 years. Mary stands at the beginning, the Haemorrhoïssa at the end. Both women embody a *rite de passage*. On Mary and the controversial considerations of her *menses*, see: A. Demyttenaere, »The cloth and the stain«, in *Fraue in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter. Lebensbedingungen, Lebensnormen, Lebensformen*, ed. W. Affeldt, Sigmaringen, 1990, pp. 141–166.

98. It would lead us too far astray for our present purposes to investigate the other late medieval traces of blood, Eucharist, and the sacred space. I would like to refer to the studies by C.W. Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption. Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion*, New York, 1992, p. 99 and C.W. Bynum, *Wonderful Blood. Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond*, Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA, 2007; D. Biale, *Blood and Belief. The Circulation of a Symbol between Jews and Christians*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 2007.

Summary

Since early-Christian times, a specific iconography was developed around the story of the woman with the Haemorrhage (Mark 5: 24b–34parr). The textual and visual tradition of the so-called Haemorrhoïssa is related in a specific way to Christ's healing miracles and the blood taboo concerning women, releasing an intense energy with regard to touching, the gaze and sacred space. In fact, the medieval reception of the story became an important catalyst for uterine taboos, menstruations and magic.

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